R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH ON GROUP COUNSELING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING, RESEARCH SEMINAR ON GROUP COUNSELING HELD AT ARDEN HOUSE IN HARRIMAN, NEW YORK, MARCH 1964.

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BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

REPORT NUMBER CRP-F-029 PUB DATE 64
EDRS PRICE MF-$0.18 HC-$2.64 66P.

DESCRIPTORS- SEMINARS, *CONFERENCES, *GROUP COUNSELING, *RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, *PROGRAM GUIDES, COUNSELOR TRAINING, *COUNSELING GOALS, SCHOOL SERVICES, RESEARCH PROJECTS, GUIDES, RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES, TRAINING, BEDFORD HILLS, NEW YORK

A GROUP COUNSELING CONFERENCE, INVOLVING 22 CONSULTANTS, PROVIDED MANY IDEAS RELATED TO GROUP COUNSELING AND RESEARCH. FUTURE RESEARCH GUIDELINES WERE DEVELOPED AND A VARIETY OF ASPECTS IN THE GROUP COUNSELING PROCESS WERE IDENTIFIED. MANY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WERE REPORTED, SUCH AS A PROJECT ON THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS FOR INCLUSION OR CONSIDERATION IN ANY FUTURE RESEARCH PROGRAM, GROUP TECHNIQUE, AND EDUCATION AND RESEARCH TRAINING PROJECTS. THIS REPORT SHOULD IMPROVE THE GENERAL LEVEL OF RESEARCH IN GROUP COUNSELING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. (RS)

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RESEARCH SEMINAR ON GROUP COUNSELING

Cooperative Research Project No. F-029

GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH ON GROUP COUNSELING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SETTING

Benjamin Cohn, Ed. D., Editor

Sponsored by

BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
First Supervisory District Westchester County
546 North Bedford Road, Bedford Hills, New York

Held at

Arden House Harriman, New York

March 1 - 7, 1964

The research reported herein was supported by the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare under contract with the New York State Education Department.

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PREFACE

The Research Seminar on Group Counseling held at Arden House in Harriman, New York, during the first week of March 1964, provided a stimulating exchange among representatives of the various disciplines related to group counseling and research. It was an experience which germinated many ideas and to which expression is given in the following report.

Need for the Conference

In the past few years there has been a resurgence of interest in group procedures to enhance the effectiveness of the typical school guidance program. Of these group procedures, group counseling received by far the greatest attention of all group guidance activities. As reported by Wright:[1]

> "The attention given to group counseling was accompanied by a greater acceptance of this procedure as a valid concept of counseling per se and by the recognition that the group process might provide some benefits which individual counseling does not."

The conviction that group counseling has great potential for use by guidance personnel spurred our interest in a conference designed to investigate some of the areas and problems that affect the evaluation of this technique. Despite growing and widespread use of group counseling, there has been little systematic and well-defined research in the field.

In recognition of the above considerations, this conference was organized with the support of the U.S. Office of Education, Cooperative Research Branch, under contract with the New York State Education Department, and the Board of Cooperative Educational Services, First supervisory District, Northern Westchester County, Bedford Hills, New York.

1. Wright, E.W., Review of Educational Research, April, 1963, 205-213.

Conference Objectives

The primary objective of the conference was to develop guidelines for future research in group counseling as it applies to the educational environment. In addition, the conference provided opportunities: (1) To clarify our understanding of the aims and goals of the group counseling process, (2) To exchange ideas with the expectancy of generating new ideas pertaining to this process, and especially, (3) To identify research problems to be considered in future research designs.

As a point of departure, group counseling was defined as a dynamic interpersonal process involving the use of counseling techniques with normal individuals. The members of the group mutually explore, with the counselor, their problems and feelings in an attempt to modify their attitudes and values so that they are better able to deal with their developmental and educational situations. The counseling group is composed of six to ten peers working with a professionally trained counselor in a non-medical setting.

Conference Participants

Twenty-two nationally known consultants were selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience in the areas of group counseling, group guidance, group dynamics, group therapy, and research methodology. All consultants invited had previously demonstrated their competencies in one or more of these related fields.

The following is a list of the conference consultants with their positions and institutional affiliation at the time of the conference.

Dr. Arthur Blumberg
Group Dynamics Center
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dr. Angelo Boy
Group Counselor
Lexington Public Schools
Lexington, Massachusetts

Dr. Stanley Caplan
Group Counselor
Public Schools of Albuquerque
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Dr. Harold Cottingham, Director
Department of Guidance & Counseling
Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida

Dr. Joan Criswell, Assistant Chief
Div. Research Grants & Demonstrations
Vocational Rehabilitation Adminis.
Dept Health, Educ. & Welfare
Washington, D. C.

Dr. Donald Davis, Director
Counseling Bureau
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Dr. Rudolph Dreikurs
Group Psychiatrist
Chicago Medical School
Chicago, Illinois

Dr. Helen Driver, Director
Family Life Education Program
Madison, Wisconsin

Dr. Paul Eiserer, Director
School Psychology Training Program
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, New York

Dr. L. Clovis Hirning
Educational Psychiatrist
Board of Coop. Educational Services
Bedford Hills, New York

Dr. Nathan Jaspen
Professor of Educational Statistics
New York University
New York, New York

Dr. Henry Kaiser, Professor
Bureau of Educational Research
University of Illinois
Champaign, Illinois

Dr. Paul Lohnes, Associate Professor
School of Education
State University of New York
Buffalo, New York

Dr. Clarence Mahler
Visiting Professor
New York University
New York, New York

Dr. Oscar Mink
Junior High School Project
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Dr. Gilbert Moore
Associate Professor of Education
State University of New York
Buffalo, New York

Dr. Merle M. Ohlsen
Professor of Educational Psychology
University of Illinois
Urbana, Illinois

Dr. Charles Seashore
Research Director
National Training Laboratories
National Education Association
Washington, D. C.

Dr. Merville Shaw
Associate Professor
University of California
Los Angeles, California

Dr. Samuel R. Slavson
Consultant in Group Psychotherapy
New York, New York

Dr. Manford Sonstegard
Guidance & Education Psychology
Southern Illinois University
Alton, Illinois

Dr. Jane Warters
Professor of Education
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California

Left to Right: Mink, Wellman, Blumberg, Dunsmoor, Hirning, Eiserer, Boy, Sonstegard, Ohlsen, Driver, Cottingham, Moore, Caplan, Slavson, Criswell, Ratchick, Dreikurs, Warters, Cohn, Shaw, Davis, Lohnes, Kaiser, (Mrs. Kaiser), Sniffen. Secretarial Staff: Bennett, Kinney, VanDemark, Rowedder. Not in Picture: Jaspen, Mahler, Seashore.

In addition to the consultants, four observers were present: Dr. Frank E. Wellman from the U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.; Dr. Irving Ratchick from the New York State Education Department, Albany, New York; Dr. Noble J. Gividen, Superintendent of the First Supervisory District, Westchester County, New York; and Dr. A. Mead Sniffen from the BOCES Guidance Center, Bedford Hills, New York, representing the Schools of Northern Westchester.

Conference Procedures

Each consultant was assigned to one of five teams: A. Definition; B. Techniques; C. Selection; D. Design; E. Evaluation. During the team meetings a rough report was prepared for presentation to the total group at plenary sessions. These plenary sessions offered the conferees an opportunity to contribute additional thoughts or suggestions to be considered for inclusion in the draft to be submitted to the writers committee. The Writers Committee wrote independently during the week and met Friday afternoon and Saturday to consolidate each team's efforts. The committee attempted to delete duplicated material and to expand or clarify questionable points.

All team and plenary sessions were tape recorded. In addition, each team had a secretary available at every session to summarize proceedings. At least two secretaries were on hand for every plenary session for the same purpose. These secretaries worked diligently to prepare mimeographed copies of each preceding team or plenary session for the conference participants before their next meeting. Every effort was made to keep all conferees informed of the activities of other teams in addition to their own.

The Seminar Schedule which follows outlines the eighteen sessions held during the week. The opening session, held Sunday evening, included addresses on the problems of present research on group counseling. The addresses centered around the need for better research in group counseling as seen by (1) the U. S. Office of Education and presented by Dr. Frank E. Wellman, Specialist in Guidance and Counseling Programs, (2) a counselor educator, Dr. Harold M. Cottingham, Head of the Department of Guidance and Counseling at Florida State University, and (3) a researcher in group counseling, Dr. Merle M. Ohlsen, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois.

The Monday morning session was an orientation period where problems were presented and the conference schedule explained. At this meeting the consultants were given the opportunity to exchange opinions and become acquainted with each other's views. It also offered an opportunity to discuss the goals of the conference and some possible avenues for their accomplishment.

During the third session Monday, Team E, Evaluation, did not meet. Each member from this team met with one of the other teams to gain an overview of the problem and to offer suggestions. As a team completed its report at a plenary session, the members were assigned to work with other teams still operating.

Tuesday evening the group heard several members explain their approaches to group counseling. Because some members felt that a direct experience in group counseling, as demonstrated by leaders with different orientations would be helpful, presentations were made by Dr. Rudolph Dreikurs, Dr. Samuel Slavson, and Dr. Merle Ohlsen.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9 to 12		(2) ORIENTATION	(5) TEAM MEETINGS (B,C,D & E)	(8) TEAM MEETINGS (C,D &E)	(11) TEAM E PLENARY SESSION REPORT ON EVALUATION	(14) TEAM SUMMARY REPORTS	(17) WRITERS COMMITTEE MEETS
		LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
2 to 5	REGISTRATION 4 P. M.	(3) TEAM MEETINGS (A,B,C & D)	(6) TEAM B PLENARY SESSION REPORT ON TECHNIQUES	(9) TEAM C PLENARY SESSION REPORT ON SELECTION	(12) ALL TEAMS MEET TO PREPARE FINAL REPORTS	(15) CONCLUDING SEMINAR SESSION CONFERENCE ENDS 4 P.M.	(18) FINAL SESSION WRITERS COMMITTEE END 4 P.M.
	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	DINNER	
7 to 10	(1) Opening Addresses: PROBLEMS OF RESEARCH IN GROUP COUNSELING	(4) TEAM A PLENARY SESSION REPORT ON DEFINITION	(7) DEMONSTRATION OF TECHNIQUES	(10) TEAM D PLENARY SESSION REPORT ON DESIGN	(13) ALL TEAMS MEET	(16) WRITERS COMMITTEE MEETS	

Key: Team A, Definition; Team B, Techniques; Team C, Selection; Team D, Design; Team E, Evaluation

Our thanks go to the entire group of consultants who played a vital part in making this conference a success. They faced their conference responsibilities energetically and enthusiastically.

Appreciation and thanks are likewise extended to the members of the Writers Committee for their summaries, suggestions and counsel during the closing days of the conference. This committee was composed of Drs. Stanley Caplan, Helen Driver, Oscar Mink, Merville Shaw, Manford Sonstegard, and Jane Warters.

Special acknowledgment is made to Dr. Frank E. Wellman, Dr. Harold F. Cottingham, and Dr. Merle M. Ohlsen for their fine kick-off addresses delivered at the opening session of the conference. Their presentations, though informal, very effectively set the stage and tone for the seminar.

The dedicated efforts of our four secretaries, Mrs. Helen Kinney, Mrs. Virginia Rowedder, Miss Joan Bennett, and Mrs. Dorothy VanDemark were instrumental in maintaining the continuity of our conference deliberations and in making the various seminar committees function expeditiously and effectively.

We, and all who participated in the seminar, are indebted to Dr. Robert O. Beezer, Cooperative Research Branch of the U. S. Office of Education, for his helpful assistance and cooperation in planning this conference.

Benjamin Cohn,

C. C. Dunsmoor,

Co-Directors of the Seminar

PROLOGUE

Man possesses a private perceptual world which enables him to function with apparent clarity and ease. As he looks at himself, Man may indeed see truth; but this truth is often limited because Man's frame of reference is only himself. As he takes a private view from within, Man is able to see much; but often this view is obscured because he has no frame of reference exterior to himself to challenge a seemingly well-structured inner self.

When Man is placed within the context of a group he cannot continue to rely only upon himself for a view of himself. Through the process of group interaction he comes in contact with the group's perception of what he is or what he purports to be. Thus, it is within the context of the group that Man gains a greater self awareness. He is confronted with the perceptions of others rather than relying solely upon a subjective perception of himself. The catalytic nature of the group's reaction brings Man to consider other perceptions of himself as well.

It is only in light of this more refined awareness of self, provided by group interaction, that Man is able to gain a more complete awareness of his substance; and it is this more enriched concept of himself that enables Man to release his full positive potential to society.

We are committed to the democratic principle that each individual merits opportunity for his maximum development, and that it is necessary for us to be concerned with preventing the growth of barriers which reduce the access of one individual to another. This concern rises in part from a value judgment made by educational

practitioners and behavioral scientists that an individual's sense of adequacy is important in and of itself, and in part from the assumption that in order to be adequate, one must be capable of forming warm and meaningful relationships with others. These personal and cultural values influence all parts of a research project - its definition, the techniques used, selection procedures, and the design and evaluation procedures. Their existence or lack of existence must be brought into our awareness before an evaluation can be made regarding their possible effects.

Traditionally, in our political and ethical history we have stressed values of individual dignity and worth, and recently extensive resources have been poured into mental health pursuits. Evidently the above values are so important to us that degrees of health, however defined, have become a matter of extreme concern to our people. If we do not recognize the primacy of these values, we may retreat into a research encapsulation which becomes more concerned with the mechanics of behavioral change than with the becoming of these values.

Hewing too closely to the quantitative line may stifle the creative or divergent thinking that is necessary to see new relationships. We need to consider from a wide range of questions those which should be asked before we can settle on which questions we should further investigate by a quantitative approach. The problem of defining the right question may be much the more difficult step in the total research procedure and probably the most important. A study of human behavior generally goes through a lengthy period of assumptions before specific hypotheses or designs for evalua-

tion can be made.

The demands for counseling in the modern school are steadily increasing due to complexities of society and to rapidly expanding pupil enrollments. These demands also take into account the growing recognition of the vital importance of the counselor's function in today's educational programs and the need for personality adjustment. Group counseling appears to be a practical approach for providing a counseling experience to most children in schools.

To meet the need and to extend the services and influences of the qualified counseling personnel available, school administrators, guidance leaders and counselor educators are becoming vitally concerned with the development of new approaches. Hence, the search for new and effective techniques based upon adequate and continuing research.

The public school - the common denominator of youth - is a logical center of operation for the group counseling approach. It is in this setting that there is found the larger number of individuals for whom the possibility of change is greatest. It is also in this setting that the greater number of personnel resources, both currently and potentially, exists.

Whatever the method used to prevent social malfunction, it must involve interaction with other individuals. Major problems dealt with in education involve the individual's effective functioning in a social setting. One of the most appropriate means of attempting to deal with these problems may very well be group counseling. The primary objectives of group counseling are indirectly associated with

the alleviation of many national problems in the areas of employment, education and the national economy.

Group counseling, whether as preventive mental hygiene or as an educative group experience designed to aid individual development is recommended as an integral part of the school program.

Sufficient experience with group counseling procedures has accumulated during the past decade to suggest the worth of the program as part of the educative process. Work in this field must continue, and even be extended, because of the human values involved. We acknowledge the need to intensify our study through ever more rigorous research if our practices are to be improved. This Seminar was held and this report has been produced to encourage and stimulate new avenues of exploration into the potentialities and values of group counseling and to suggest some guidelines for future research in this area.

Chapter I - POINTS OF DEPARTURE

MAJOR ORIENTATIONS

The major theoretical orientations or philosophies that seem currently to be exerting the greatest influence upon group counseling practices are tied to certain personality theories. These orientations seem to provide the rationale needed in developing research on the group counseling techniques used in the schools. The list includes among others, the psychoanalytic, Adlerian, neo-Freudian, neo-behavioral, client-centered, psycho-biological, and existential theories.

Adherence to a particular theoretical orientation should not preclude flexibility and creativity. The group counseling situation is dynamic, not static. Effective counselors generate new ideas which they add to those of their accepted orientation. A counselor may not always function in keeping with the teachings of those who first developed the theory, but the basic concepts may remain essentially unchanged. A strategy may be applied differently in a school from the way that it is applied in a clinic, but the governing concepts are fundamentally the same. Similarly, because of personality differences, counselors in the same setting and orientation may employ different strategies or may employ the same strategy differently.

Among various orientations there is agreement coupled with disagreement. There is, for example, agreement regarding the importance of the quality of the counselor-client relationship; that the relationship should be characterized by warmth, understanding, and acceptance. There is, however, disagreement regarding the degree of

freedom to be permitted the group members. There is agreement that group counseling provides a climate for learning, but there is disagreement regarding the extent to which the counselor should direct learning through the use of information and didactic interpretation. There is agreement that clients should be given the right to make their own decisions but there is disagreement regarding the extent to which counselors should influence group members to make decisions in particular directions. Many other examples can be added and, in the main, they would probably show agreement outweighing disagreement.

SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Group counseling is a process for aiding pupils in their school, social, and personal adjustment through the use of small group interaction under the leadership of a competent counselor. This process falls somewhere on a continuum between teaching and group therapy. Exactly where it falls on this continuum depends upon the personality, philosophy and skill of the counselor and upon the level of involvement of the counselees. This process is used primarily to help pupils deal with the difficulties encountered in growing up in our increasingly complex society.

It should be made available to all pupils and particularly at certain stages of their school careers. For instance, group counseling could be used in preparing students for the transition from one educational level to another - elementary to junior high school, junior high school to senior high school, and senior high school to college or occupation. In the lower grades it may be used to pro-

vide a means for identifying and heading off difficulties that otherwise may develop into feelings of inadequacy or later acting out behavior. In the upper grades it should be available to help students make educational and vocational choices. And, of course, at all these levels it can be a valuable approach to an understanding and solution of personal and social problems of adjustment which students may be experiencing at any given time.

Group counseling serves society as well as the school community and the students themselves. Through use of the group counseling process, we attempt to take advantage of the fact that most of the difficult situations in which children find themselves are within group settings. Because of the "group" nature of our culture, there are present both pressures and values which the individual can learn to use in a positive fashion.

Group counseling seeks to help pupils learn more about themselves and thus develop a greater degree of self-awareness and self-understanding. It helps students to make choices from the alternatives available, to act upon these choices, and to assume the responsibility and consequences for them. Group counseling helps pupils learn methods of coping with and solving some of the normal problems of growing up at various stages in their school careers. The pupils are helped to attain constructive goals acceptable to society and to themselves, as well as to overcome the impediments to their personal growth which hinder the educational process.

When the student accepts the counselor as an understanding adult and feels secure with others in the group, a growing concern for each other as persons of worth helps the group develop

cohesiveness. Pupils who have had such a group counseling experience - a warm, accepting group led by a competent counselor whom they respect - attest to the values of the experience. They sense an enjoyment of the group membership and of social interaction. In discussing personal worries or problems they find support and reassurance from the group as well as from the counselor. There is a reduction of tension from talking out their feelings and a clarification of their problems resulting in improved attitudes and self-confidence. A greater objectivity is achieved in viewing one's own difficulties along with an increased understanding and acceptance of the "self." There is an improved empathy, tolerance and sympathy for others, as well as improved skill in verbal expression and social communication.

The pupils unite in joint efforts to deal with themselves and their difficulties. Both they and the counselor enter into a significant emotional relationship and feel pleasure in each other's progress and achievement. These students act as a source of comfort to each other in time of trouble and often suggest "try out" behavior, and may occasionally role-play situations to help other members of the group. Their reaction from the "feed back" received from fellow members tends to influence their attitudes and behavior and they often have the opportunity to ventilate certain feelings freely in the group which they might otherwise feel compelled to withhold.

Group members feel less threatened after security and cohesiveness in the group have developed, and are thus encouraged by the other members to discover new personal and social values. These

outcomes may be evidenced in cognitive, attitudinal, and/or behavioral changes. The student may also decide not to change, but even then he will be better able to anticipate and accept the consequences of acting and feeling in his old manner.

Some of the functions of the group counselor are to select, or assist in the selection of, pupils for group counseling; to determine the addition or elimination of pupils from the group after it has been formed; to provide a psychological and physical climate in which the pupils can feel secure and accepted; and to set whatever limits on the students' physical and verbal behavior which may be necessary in the particular school situation.

The well-qualified counselor uses the forces of group interaction, called dynamics, to generate helpful relationships that will encourage personal growth. He must be aware of the underlying factors of personality dynamics and be alert to their meanings when these are manifested consciously. He defines his own responsibility and that of the group members to each other regarding the confidential nature of the material revealed in the group sessions.

The counselor serves a catalytic role as he stimulates verbal and non-verbal interaction and, especially, emotionally affective involvement. He draws upon and adopts techniques he might use in individual counseling - techniques such as clarification, interpretation, reflection, questioning or probing, information giving or answering questions. He encourages sensitivity to the needs of others in each group member so that they can help one another with their problems.

The counselor influences a child consciously or unconsciously

by his orientation and motivation. This can be either constructive, ineffective and even at times, destructive. The counselor must be aware of his inner feelings and attitudes, even if they are not verbalized. Not only does the group counselor exert influence on the students, but he must help the group members use the peer group influence and channel it for constructive personal and social growth. His theoretical orientation implies his concept of man, his concept of change agents, his basic premises regarding human growth and development, and his concept of himself. His approach to groups may take on a variety of forms and styles. Presumably he selects them in keeping with the needs of the particular group with which he is working at the moment.

SELECTION PROCEDURES

Much of present and past research has used selection methods centering around crises in education - dropouts in high school; delinquency; high unemployment rates for unskilled teenagers; society's demand for highly trained workers.

There has been, as the outgrowth of these problems, an urgency to "save" the teenager. Thus, because of the pressure of the numbers of students involved, combined with a shortage of adequately trained counselor personnel, "crisis students" have made up most of the usual counseling groups.

Beyond the broad scope of identifying these students as underachievers, or as students with acting out behavior, little else has been examined. It is only known that these pupils are having difficulties and that social factors involving school, family and commun-

ity have somehow disturbed their approach to living in today's society.

In addressing ourselves to the selection process for counseling groups, many other issues come to light and must be thoroughly examined and understood before successful expectations can be validly projected.

Scanty data are available for predicting optimum success thus far in reference to pupils' age and ability to participate; therefore, the school counselor needs more information and help in order to make better decisions in selection and grouping.

Determinants for the inclusion or exclusion of students from potential counseling groups are practically non-existent; bases for heterogeneity or homogeneity are vague, as are the bases for voluntary or involuntary, open or closed groups. Such selection criteria, as well as others, should be studied and firmer bases found for selection. Following are some problems which should be investigated but the list should not be construed as being all inclusive.

1. There needs to be an exploration of different combinations of selected groups, with and without adjunctive individual counseling. There is a question as to whether it is best to counsel only students or to also involve their teachers and parents. Should these groups be counseled simultaneously or at different times?

2. Variables for selection should have more creative approaches than those currently used (e.g., conformity versus nonconformity). Is our goal to have the student exemplify one and not the other?

3. It is generally assumed that the law of dimishing returns operates as related to the numbers to be included in a group. Large sized groups may lessen the effectiveness of counseling. Definitive knowledge on most effective group size for counseling is apparently not as yet available.

4. The question of group counseling for all or for only selected students is still to be investigated. The relative merits of working with typical versus atypical youngsters are not clear.

5. Does the type of grouping have any effect on counseling outcomes? Because of the shortage of trained personnel, should the counselor's time be used where success is most likely? If the counselor's orientation affects his selection and his effectiveness with certain students, and if both his choice of group members and skill as a counselor are highly correlated, further research needs to be done to determine which type of students a particular counselor can help.

6. Investigations are needed to study the interaction effects of individuals in groups by soci-economic levels, and how this may be influenced by the socio-economic level of the counselor. The counselor's values may be quite different from the values of the group due to their different social milieu and we do not know whether this is good or bad for the students we are trying to help.

7. At the present time supervised group counseling experience is not generally part of a counselor's educational preparation. Because of this lack, group counselors may tend to be inflexible, and lack creativity in their practice and in the selection process. A great deal of time is lost deciding on the criteria for selecting students with whom a given counselor is best suited to work. Perhaps his effectiveness with specific groups could be determined during the counselor's supervised training period.

8. There is a need for a study of autonomous in-groups or sex peer groups of preadolescents. It has long been known that these groups have a strong effect on individual attitudes and behavior. Methods have to be evolved to find out the needs that are being sought through these groups and how the individuals involved have impact upon each other. These small groups often set the pattern for achievement. Closer examination of these autonomous groups may produce useful tools for selection and may enable us to initiate completely voluntary groups without too much concern for the varied selection criteria.

9. There is a need for further research in follow-up studies to determine whether continuous growth takes place. Maturing is a spasmodic process. The emphasis here would be on how growth or lack of growth relates to the selective process.

10. In order to sharpen our selective techniques we need to delineate the critical factors in the selective process which are at work in individuals who elect not to return after the first counseling session. We need to know whether a student should or should not be protected from peer group pressures by selection for group membership, and we need to develop more valid bases for exclusion of certain students from group counseling.

11. Other selection problems relate to the introduction of an experienced group member who may bring about more rapid results. This idea is related to the question of open versus closed groups. That is, in closed groups usually all members begin with relatively the same degree of experience or inexperience in group counseling and no new member is introduced during the pre-set period of counseling sessions. In open groups any individual group member may "graduate" or terminate at any point during the course of the counseling sessions, or a new member may be introduced at any point during the series of sessions.

12. The sex of the counselor seems to be an important variable to consider in selecting groups for some counselors and/or members. The interpersonal dynamics of the students may indicate the choice of a male or female counselor; or a counselor may work more successfully with students of one sex (i.e., the opposite or the same). Still another problem of selection is associated with the wide difference of opinion on heterosexual versus single sex selection, and how this may affect group dynamics.

13. At the present time many schools still operate quite autocratically. How does this affect the functioning of a democratic counseling group? Perhaps, too, there is now too much consideration given to the flexible/rigid continuum factor in the school schedule. This factor probably affects the freedom, or lack or it, for having volunteer groups.

14. Since the choice of a location for holding counseling sessions may affect favorably or adversely the counseling outcomes, the physical setting and facilities should be taken into consideration along with other considerations when doing research in this area.

15. Investigation should be made on the relative success of voluntary groups centered around a problem, such as underachievement, versus groups arbitrarily selected by the school administrator.

16. Rather than treating underachievement as a general criterion, different types of underachievement should be delineated and selection should be made for homogeneity on criteria within these more exact frameworks.

Chapter II - RESEARCH METHODS

RESEARCH DESIGN

Any consideration of research designs in group counseling must have as a starting point the forthright acknowledgment of the complexity of the problem. Such acknowledgment can lead to an understanding of the nature of research efforts necessary in order for the research to be productive. Because of the complexity of the fields of psychometrics, statistics, and counseling, specialization exists. Successful research results must include the involvement of a psychometrician, statistician and other specialists determined by the scope of the design in the planning, as well as in the other phases of the research effort.

A plea is made to avoid "discipline myopia." The principal investigator, if he is a counselor, should make certain that the specialists representative of these closely allied disciplines work cooperatively with him and adopt his problem so that they begin to have as much loyalty to the problem as they do to their own specialties. Careful and systematic use of these directly related disciplines will save the investigator many hours of useless and potentially unsuccessful groundbreaking.

Outcomes of previous research are wanting for various reasons. Inadequate sampling procedures, poor definition of criteria, confounding of criteria, inadequately conceptualized control groups, and lack of effective scaling of measures used to evaluate specific criteria are seen as but a few of the critical problems.

Compared with the problems of theoretical formulation and subsequent measurement, the question of research designs and statistical

models is relatively straightforward. Even though the problem of statistical models is an easier problem to solve, it has not necessarily been solved.

This section on research designs in group counseling considers the following areas:

1. Means of approaching research
2. The group as a variable or a setting
3. Measurement of the members' personality and goals
4. Individual differences in desired outcomes
5. Selection of criteria measures
6. Incorporation of learning
7. Multivariate statistical methods - an approach

Little attempt has been made to discuss the clinical, historical, field-and-survey approaches to research since good texts offer useful guides in general research methods. The primary orientation of this section is the methodological problems of experimental research in group counseling. The focus upon experimental research is not meant to suggest that little value is placed upon other methods. As already indicated, many methods are appropriate.

Means of Approaching Research

Persons who want to measure something different from established traits should study simultaneously, not only criteria variables with which they are directly concerned, but variables which are relevant and well understood. The development of reliable criteria measures in the field of group counseling is far from an advanced stage. This may, indeed, be one of the reasons that the research to date has not been able to supply the field with much significant data related to change as a result of group counseling. Therefore, it seems to make sense that, along with attempting to get measures of change on desired criteria measures, other relevant and better understood

variables should be included in studies of group counseling. Investigations that include such efforts may well provide clues to the development of more highly refined outcome measures.

The rationale for including data from well-established measuring instruments is that some psychological instruments developed by investigators may be either unreliable, invalid, or measure something which instruments already available are measuring.

The Group as a Variable or a Setting

One traditional research design has conceived of membership in a counseling group as a variable to be related to some outcome measures, e.g., people who have belonged to a group are compared with people who have not, on such outcome measures as social adjustment, school achievement, congruency of perceived and ideal self, etc. This approach has several disadvantages because of obvious differences in amount, quality, and meaning of group membership to the individual members. It also fails to specify a theory stating the conditions in the group which are believed to influence a given outcome measure.

An alternative but not mutually exclusive point of view is to look at the group as a setting in which certain conditions that will influence the outcome measure may be introduced for given members of the group. The importance of looking at the group as a setting is that the conditions for creating desired changes may or may not exist for any given member and that the control group then consists of persons for whom the desired relationship is not established.

For example, one could hypothesize that if a trusting relationship developed between the member and the counselor within a few

sessions, and interpretations were made by the counselor and accepted by the member, a given outcome measure would be effected. If one counselor can establish a trust relationship with ninety percent of the members of his group and another counselor can establish this relationship with only ten percent of the members, the researcher selects for inclusion in the experimental group only those cases where the desired relationship has been established and leaves the remaining members in the control group.

The experimental group would then consist of those members among whom there was success in establishing a relationship or condition for change. From this point of view, theories about individual growth can be tested in the group setting or in the individual counseling setting. It also makes possible the control of individual counselor differences, if one is not measuring the counselor trait, but rather the relationship a counselor forms with the members or is able to induce between members. However, criterion contamination must be guarded against. Attention should be given to the development of theoretical models which specify the conditions within a group which affect outcomes. These reference variables are important to consider because they may be common to several theoretical orientations in counseling. Researchable process variables common to several theoretical orientations could represent a solution to the sample problem and several similar issues raised elsewhere in this report.

In studying the group as a setting, it is important to focus on variables which are at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and

group levels. Some examples of group variables are as follows:

1. Size
2. Communication structure
3. Power structure
4. Leadership pattern of counselor
5. Composition of the group
6. Quality of counselor/member relationship
7. Group climate
8. Mores, values, norms
9. Goals
10. Cohesiveness

Concern about research into what might be called the "process variables" of group counseling exists because a group is a social unit. It is different from the sum of its individual parts. Various aspects of group life, such as the nature of its norms, a person's place in its sociometric or communications structure, the nature of the group's goals, etc., all have the potential of influencing the amount and kind of change that may be induced in an individual. Without adequate knowledge of the nature of these variables, group counseling can only advance in a hit-or-miss fashion.

Measurement of Members' Personality and Goals

For any given concept it is suggested that as many different sources of data be utilized as is feasible. If, for example, one is measuring aggressiveness, one should attempt to obtain data on the person's own judgment, the judgment of those persons who are in a position to observe his behavior, and any objective measures of aggressive acting out behavior. It is not assumed that any one of these will necessarily be valid by itself, but that multiple measurement of a given concept increases the possibility of reliable measurement. For some people self-report may be the most reliable; for others, the opinion of observers is most reliable; and for still

others, a combination of the two would be most consistent. This is a methodological problem in and of itself which must be recognized and coped with as well as possible by the researcher.

A closely related problem, but worthy of special consideration, is obtaining more than one clinical judgment of a person. Perhaps this would include clinicians with different, as well as those with similar, theoretical frames of reference. The reason for using clinical judgments of persons representing various theoretical orientations is a simple one. Theoretical bias influencing observations can confound results as readily as using a thirteen inch ruler to measure firewood under the assumption that the ruler is only twelve inches long. Science knows too much about the effect of personal bias in observation to ignore the problem.

It is possible to make measurements of personality at different levels in the same person. As an example, anxiety may be measured by self-report and instruments such as the Manifest Anxiety Scale; projective tests such as the Rorschach or Thematic Apperception Tests; or, at the physiological level, by the Galvanic Skin Response. Some of these measures may not be appropriate for the normal counseling setting, but may be possible only under specific experimental conditions. The same advantages accrue for measurement of the same concept at different levels within the person, as is the case for measurement from different sources, mentioned previously.

It is impossible to state all intervening activities and experiences of all subjects between measurements. However, it should be

at least acknowledged that such a source of influence does exist. (See discussion of the problem of time lapse between end of treatment and follow-up in the succeeding section on evaluation.)

Individual Difference in Desired Outcomes

It is possible to compose groups whose members have similar characteristics or to describe problems at a general level so that a single criterion can be used for all members of a group, but both of these approaches do violence to the individuality of group members. It is suggested that an attempt be made to diagnose individual problems at the stated, inferred, or unconscious levels of analysis and that criteria measures be developed according to the diagnosis. If clinical judgments are made, more than one clinician should make an assessment. This offers several opportunities for measurement of growth by assessing each of these variables during the course of the counseling process and by looking at the degree to which a person could incorporate his growth and apply it to other situations. It would thus be important to obtain measures of the following variables:

1. The stated, inferred, and unconscious problem areas
2. The disorganization or anxiety experienced by the member which was thought to be conducive to growth
3. The possible substitution of other symptoms for the stated problem
4. The capacity and readiness of other people to accept and support desired changes in the member's personality and behavior

It is noted that some social systems such as the family or the peer group can actively resist, be indifferent to, or support change in the behavior of one of its members. The delinquent boy who begins to change his pattern of behavior is often faced with strong

pressures from other members of his peer group to remain delinquent. A child who is having difficulty in learning to read and then begins to grow in this area under group influence, may find himself under stress from his family who may need him as a scapegoat for their own emotional reasons.

The selection of goals for individual members should, in addition to judgments about the person's own capacity for growth, take account of the capacity of others to whom he is related. It will be important to assess whether changes in growth in a given member act as a freeing device for other persons to whom he is significantly related, or whether individual growth will cause a disruptive pattern in his group relationship outside of counseling. For example, helping one child to overcome a deficiency in reading may cause another child in the same family situation to begin acting out.

Selection of Criteria Measures

Many times our criteria measures are selected because of the current interest in a social problem such as delinquency, underachievement, school dropout, etc., and we are led to make naive judgments about the processes of individual growth which are related to these criteria variables. This may be helpful in relating research to societal concerns, but it may also restrict the research and limit the selection of criteria or questions to be studied, or lead to the selection of contaminated or otherwise meaningless criteria.

It is important to include in the outcome measures, variables which are negatively valued in many parts of our culture, but which may be an important part of an individual growth process. For in-

stance, many people go through a period of personality disequilibrium during the counseling process and prior to some integration. Designs should reflect this in trying to establish the possible presence and duration of negative consequences, as well as positive consequences. It is equally true that positive initial signs of change may be either sustained or be a prelude to more negative kinds of consequences. These factors should be taken into consideration in group counseling designs.

It is important to take into account the difficulty encountered in any process of directed growth of individuals. It is easy to overstate the possibility of achieving desired ends and to neglect measurement of outcomes which may be a good deal more limited than measures of adjustment, deviant behavior or achievement.

For example, for some individuals a simple commitment to examine the possibility of change in one's conception of self, relationships with other persons, behavior in school, and the like, may be a very significant step which occurs prior to any actual change in these variables. A willingness to remain in a counseling group over a period of time would be an example, for some people, of a limited outcome goal which may precede movement toward a more significant goal - in other words, a variable antecedent to change. Measures of these intermediate goals need to be included in research designs.

It has been noted that in many studies comparison between means of the scores of experimental and control groups has been used in the analysis. Quite frequently no changes are found in the means. Additional analysis of the data of some of these studies has indicated, however, that there has been a change in the variances. This

can be accounted for by the notion that some members of the group may be changing in a positive direction and others in a negative direction. In some instances this may be a preceding step to a positive change. Care should be given to analyze measures of variance as well as those of central tendency.

Some consideration should be given to designs that use process variables as dependent variables. For example, by studying personality constructs of counselor and counselee, one could predict the degree of trust that develops between counselor and counselee.

Incorporation of Learning

Many research efforts reflect an assumption that personal change is related to changed behavior and relationships during the course of group counseling. For example, an initially aggressive member of a group who becomes constructive over a period of time may lead one to believe that some personality change has taken place. While this is a possibility, it is also possible that what is being reflected is typical behavior at different stages in the development of his relationships with other members and/or the counselor in the group. He may be gaining approval first in order to be allowed to be destructive later. When confronted with another group of persons outside the counseling group, he may repeat exactly the same sequence of behavior but which one cannot assume to be growth or adjustment due to group counseling.

Using Rogers' process conception of psychotherapy, or other such measure, one may proceed through various stages during the course of a counseling group without these changes being consolidated in any permanent sense, as part of the personality structure.

This points to the desirability of measuring behavior change that occurs in the setting of the counseling group, as well as change in behavior in situations outside of the counseling. These latter settings represent opportunities for the member to demonstrate the degree of generalization or incorporation of his learning experiences.

Research is needed to explore the role of similarity in composition of the counseling group with the group in which it is hoped the person will exhibit changed behavior. For example, if it is desired to help a child cope with parental problems, one could start with the identical group - the parents and child as the counseling group; or, one could compose the group of peers. There is some belief that changes are most enduring when the counseling group is identical with the group setting where criteria measures are obtained. However, this question needs to be investigated much more carefully.

Multivariate Statistical Methods - An Approach

Multivariate statistical methods appear to be promising in group counseling research because of the numerous process variables interacting in counseling and because of the complexity of goals for such counseling. In other words, the researcher is typically confronted with numerous related process variables and numerous related outcome variables.

He should, then, either know multivariate statistical procedures rather well himself, or collaborate with someone who does. Counseling psychologists will probably find it easy to entice quan-

titative psychologists to collaborate with them on well-planned, extensively supported research programs, as methodologists usually do not have their own substantive problems. Also, it should be easier to gain financial support for programmed research undertaken by a balanced team of specialists. Group counselors should not feel defensive in approaching quantitative people with collaboration overtures, since neither a good problem nor a good method alone is worth much. Only a marriage of the two can be profitable. Because multivariate analysis demands computer operations, these procedures unquestionably require specialized skills.

Research teams which pool the competence of a variety of specialists seem inevitably to be indicated. Since significant results can only be obtained by studies involving the observations of impressively large numbers of subjects, an excessive data-collation task for any one researcher will accrue.

Perhaps the <u>major</u> problem in group counseling research is achieving an adequate translation of theoretical constructs, pertaining to input process problems and outcomes, into feasible and reliable variables. This measurement problem can perhaps best be attacked by strategies which assign factor analysis a prominent role. Because of the contribution which factor analysis can make to the resolution of basic measurement problems, factor analysis looms as the most promising of the presently known multivariate procedures.

One of the less extensively used and understood procedures is the canonical analysis, which may ultimately replace factor

analytic procedures. If measurement research provides the most promising point for an immediate build-up of research effort on the part of group counselors, they are well prepared for beginning research in this area. Group counselors appear to have an ample supply of constructs and of hunches regarding behavioral indicators of their constructs. In other words, they are able to specify large sets of observations to be made on subjects which are thought to be relevant to the process and outcome constructs.

Factor analysis can often organize, from large and messy sets of observations, comparatively small sets of variables called factors, as weighted combinations of observations units. These factors may provide meaningful data-language representation of some of the theoretical constructs. Also, these factors probably will have superior technical characteristics, such as reliabilities, in comparison with those of the host of observation units. Certainly the measurement researches envisioned here will employ many other procedures from the psychometrician's tool-box and will seek information not obtainable from factor analyses. However, it would be unlikely that factor analysis, or perhaps a non-metric relative, would escape a major role.

Overviews of available multivariate methods are readily obtainable. The effort here will be merely to sketch a few possibilities, other than factor analysis, which may give some useful impressions. First, a model for the case of continuously distributed process variables will be described; then, a model for categorical process variables will be offered; and finally, a somewhat speculative new approach to the criterion problem, which departs

radically from the convention of continuously measured outcome traits (as assumed in the first two models) will be outlined.

Continuously Distributed Process Variables

The counseling researcher who is studying the relationships among several continuously measured process variables, (e.g., warmth, hostility, flight) and several continuously measured outcome variables, (e.g., self-ideal congruence, sociability, introspection) typically computes all possible correlation coefficients among pairs of variables. These numbers are interesting in their own right. In the case of three process and three outcome variables they provide fifteen "findings." However, in the multivariate approach (in this case, canonical analysis) the correlations serve as additional building blocks for the construction of a potentially compelling representation of the overall interdependency of the two sets of measures. Out of this analysis emerges a statement of the informational overlap or redundancy of the process and outcome variables, expressed as the correlation between three successively best weighted functions of the two sets of variables. Thus, with three process and three outcome measures, it is possible that three different important dimensions of redundancy would be discovered, or only two, or one, or none. The analysis also reveals which variables in each set make the important contributions to the interdependencies established. Many psychologists and counselors have so little experience with this model that some difficulties in learning to interpret the findings is to be expected, but almost certainly the model promises enough to warrant a build-up of experience with it.

Categorical Process Variables

In the case where process variables are observed as categorical or classification variables, it is usual for the researcher to compute factorial analysis-of-variance designs (Anova), entering one outcome variable at a time as the criterion. Again there is a more general model, called multivariate analysis of variance (Manova), which makes it possible to treat the relationships between the independent factors (process variables) and the set of criteria measures (outcome variables).

One way of thinking about this model is that it asks whether the groups of subjects formed on the categorical process variables occupy discriminably different locations on the criteria measurements. That is, the question may be asked as to whether knowledge of the outcome scores for subjects provides a useful basis for predicting the states or levels of the process variables to which they were exposed. An example would be the case in which two groups have been counseled, one by group and one by individual methods, and a third group which has not been counseled at all.

It is assumed that the entire pool of subjects represents a random sample of a population of interest, and that members of the sample were assigned at random to the three treatment groups. Manova inquires into the statistical separation of the three groups in the measurement of the several of many outcome variables. Discriminant functions which indicate the best weighted combinations of the outcome scores of individuals for predicting their treatment group memberships are produced.

Actual classifications of these subjects, or preferably of new replication-sample subjects, may be computed and tables of hits and misses may be compiled. Manova may be made more ambitious, and perhaps more realistic, by computing co-variance adjustments of outcome measures from pre test input measures, in differences existing among the groups prior to the experiment.

A New Approach to the Criterion Problem

A novel approach to counseling research may be inherent in a model that is presently being developed. The idea being explored is that one might be able to structure a formal model of a career process as it is experienced by aggregates of youngsters. This would be a real process model of events occurring in sequential decision stages over extended periods of time, such as several years. The elements of such a model are probabilities of membership in different states of a random variable for different stages or times, and tables of conditional probabilities, called transition matrices. The first model to be explored is one called the Markov Chain. All the probabilities and conditional probabilities required would be estimated from research data by frequency counts.

If a good description of a career process for an important aggregate of students can be constructed in this way, incorporating socially important decisions (e.g., curriculum choices, vocational choices) at the stages, it may become feasible to evaluate counseling programs, including group counseling, in terms of whether the introduction of such an educational innovation in a community, or a sample of communities, upsets the goodness of previously estab-

lished Markov Chain models of life processes and thus necessitates the revision or replacement of the model. In other words, the question would be whether group counseling programs have important impact on the career patterns of large aggregates of students.

The model would sort out the real winners and real losers in our society, not the Q-sort congruents and incongruents, so that demonstrations of the ability of counseling innovations to sabotage the model's grim determinism would be dramatic indeed.

Research designs as described here may have promise for counseling psychology. If so, the desire to capitalize on such designs leads almost inevitably to large, fully explored domains of variables (i.e., extensive, expensive measurement researches), large carefully selected and assigned samples of subjects, long terms for research to span important developmental sequences, and multicompetent research teams.

Summary

The need for developing an interdisciplinary approach has emerged as a cogent problem. A plea has been made for the building of a research team. However, this is not to negate the fact that the principal investigator must be capable of conducting good research.

The complexity of the counseling group as a unit and as a setting for activity has been explored. Attention has been drawn to the problem of measurement of traits and concepts. Measurement of personality is confounded by many factors included under the categories of individual differences and group variables, such as communication structures. Change wrought in one group experience may or may not

transfer to other group experiences. The reader is cautioned to explore carefully the concept that reflected attitude change in one group setting will be reflected in other group settings.

A statistical model which could determine the inter-relationships of numerous process and outcome variables and simplify the research problem by reducing many measurements to a comparatively small set of variables has been suggested because of: (1) The complexities created by the interaction of many group and individual variables, and (2) the constantly changing nature of individuals and groups.

In addition to multivariate procedures, including factor analysis, this section has suggested that a unique and somewhat far-reaching process model could be developed for process development of career choices as experienced by aggregates of young people. This model would be mathematical in nature and determined from experimental data. When developed, one could accurately predict career choices of most young people similar to the samples used in building the model. One could then treat youngsters with a process like group counseling and measure the effectiveness of the treatment in terms of short and long term deviations from the predictions of the model.

In the next section the reader will encounter an expansion of many of the ideas examined in this section. The common ground between the two sections which contributed to their complementarity is reached by different professional persons coping with the same

research problems. The present section has attempted to deal with the problems most appropriately concerned with design; whereas the next section focuses upon evaluation. The two topics - design and evaluation - are not discretely different. The primary emphasis in evaluation is the specificity of evaluation problems.

Chapter II - RESEARCH METHODS
(continued)

EVALUATION OF GROUP COUNSELING RESEARCH

The importance of clinical observations in developing appropriate and testable hypotheses in the area of group counseling is difficult to over-estimate. This is a creative act which necessarily precedes a more objective evaluation of process or outcomes. At the same time, if existing literature in the field of group counseling is an adequate gauge, the clinician needs to be persuaded that evaluation is necessary to determine actual outcomes, rather than depending solely upon his own individual perception of outcomes. In addition, such information will be of assistance in the verification or refutation of existing hypothetical systems related to group counseling.

The problem of evaluating the outcomes of group counseling cannot, in actual practice, be divorced from the more general problem of design. Perhaps it is possible, however, to make such distinction for purposes of convenience, if it is borne in mind that evaluative procedures must grow from pre-determined criteria. Where outcome criteria are vague or instruments do not exist to measure anticipated outcomes, pilot studies are indicated prior to engaging in a full scale research project.

Several factors in the evaluation of outcomes of group counseling are of general importance. Included in such a list are:

1. Sample size
2. The criterion problem
3. The timing of the evaluation
4. Significant difference versus meaningful difference
5. Process variables

Sample Size

The variety of problems inherent in the methods of group counseling militates to make it difficult to obtain adequate samples. Two, in particular, are sources of difficulty. One of these is an inadequate number of well qualified group counselors who define the counseling process in a similar manner, and enough clients of specified types. In addition to such factors, the predilections of the clinician and his dependence on small samples in the day-to-day carrying out of his work induce him to accept as satisfactory N's which are not adequate from the research point of view. An additional complicating factor related to sample size is the attrition which takes place in many groups and must be foreseen when the evaluative procedures are planned.

To illustrate more concretely, if one wanted to use the "t" test to compare an experimental and a control group on the kinds of measures often used for such purposes; on two samples of 33 each, a difference of one-half of a standard deviation would be required to afford a fifty percent chance of obtaining significance. In order for a difference as large as one-quarter of a standard deviation to reach significance at the five percent level, using the same technique, groups of 129 each would be necessary. A still larger number would be required to increase the likelihood of obtaining significance beyond fifty percent. In order to increase the power of this test from fifty percent to ninety-five percent, it is necessary to quadruple the sample size. Due to the demands of the techniques under discussion, it is obvious that

a number of groups will be needed in an experimental situation if the results are to be considered stable.

Protest may be made that N's of the size implied here will make it extremely difficult to carry out research likely to result in reliable conclusions and that both practical and financial considerations are involved. This difficulty cannot be denied, but the question is whether the research is to be adequate or not. Some kinds of research checking the effectiveness of new techniques require the use of tens of thousands of subjects in order to demonstrate effectiveness. Such research is illustrated by that recently done with the Salk vaccine. Our problem is not quite as difficult as this one, but we need to learn to face such practical problems if research on groups is to have meaning.

The Criterion Problem

Closely related to the question of sample size is the problem of the number of outcome variables to be considered in such a study. It seems desirable in such instances, to use multiple criteria to assess effectiveness and, as suggested previously, different criteria may be applied to different subjects, depending upon their presenting symptoms. Failure to differentiate goals for different classifications of counselees tends to result in the confounding of criteria. To the extent to which criteria are multiplied, a larger sample size is required.

This situation indicates the necessity of carefully thinking through the criteria to be used prior to the initiation of such a study and of selecting those few that the investigator considers

critical. This does not mean that the counselor should close his clinical eye to outcomes not taken into account by specific evaluation processes, since it is a truism that outcomes of counseling are often other than what we initially expect. These unanticipated outcomes, however, should be treated in the light of what they are -- namely, observations of a clinical sort which may be verified through further research. Another means of arriving at hypotheses for future testing might be to ask clients who have completed counseling what their particular observations of the counseling process have been in an open-ended kind of way.

Related to the problem of evaluation is the question of whether groups should be homogeneous in terms of diagnostic categories, or should be composed of individuals representing a variety of different problems. This is related to both selection techniques and evaluation. Studies dealing with this issue remain to be done. From the point of view of sample size, the fewer outcome criteria necessary, the better. However, the use of generalized criteria may serve to obscure the measurement of validly obtained differences. For instance, if certain students are referred to counseling because they are underachievers, <u>their</u> gain in grade-point average and not the gain of <u>all</u> counselees should be measured. And there must be found ways of avoiding the confounding of results by the general criteria because other criteria in addition to underachievement are present but not considered in the design nor evaluation.

Two kinds of outcome criteria can be delineated. These are <u>affective</u> (including attitudes, values, and feelings) and <u>behavioral</u>.

Some research workers attempt to apply the terms "soft" and "hard" to these two classes of variables on the assumption that if something can be seen, felt, or counted it is more objective than that which cannot meet these tests. This kind of differentiation does not necessarily hold true, and care should be taken not to make the assumption that it is necessarily a valid distinction.

A more appropriate distinction can be made on the basis of self-report techniques (Q sorts, personality tests of all varieties, etc.) and evaluation based on the reports of others, such as ratings made by teachers, (including changes in grades), and the number of times a student is expelled from class. In both cases subjectivity operates, but in one case it is the subjectivity of the students involved and in the other, the subjectivity of a not-so-disinterested observer. It is probably not possible to say that one of these kinds of criteria is better than the other. Rather, it would be desirable to validate a student's perception of change through utilizing others to determine whether they perceive similar change.

An assumption involved in the use of the affect-behavior dichotomy is that they are inter-related. It is further generally assumed that attitude change will result in behavior change. If these assumptions are valid, attitude change precedes behavior change, and thus another reason is generated for delaying measurement of behavior change for a period of time after counseling is concluded.

The problem of whether or not general criteria can be applied to the outcomes of all group counseling experiences has not been squarely faced. The literature suggests that self-concept measures

are frequently used to assess counseling outcomes, and it appears to be assumed that such changes are an expected outcome of group counseling regardless of the problem, individuals, or settings involved. Further study of this problem is obviously necessary. In the meantime it will probably be easiest to demonstrate change through group counseling by selecting specific criteria of change pertinent to specific individuals in groups. If only general criteria are applied to participants in an experimental group counseling program, the chances of obtaining significant differences on such criteria will be greatly reduced and important changes may be overlooked.

Selection of outcome criteria for group counseling research within the school setting should probably be limited to variables that can be demonstrated to have some rather direct bearing on the child's school performance. This can at least serve as a guide which will decrease the number of criteria to be considered. Where individualized criteria are utilized to determine change, or the lack of it, the problem of controls is greatly complicated. At its extreme it becomes a problem of individually matching subjects on a wide variety of criteria, a problem which may be almost insurmountable in most school situations. Where only general criteria are used in the measure of change, these will be applied to many subjects for whom they have no meaning. It is a problem where compromises with realities will be necessary.

Timing of the Evaluation

Most research in evaluation of group counseling outcomes in school settings has made use of evaluative procedures immediately

subsequent to the conclusion of counseling sessions, and only at this point. There are three logical reasons why such evaluation should be performed both at the end of counseling and at a later date; and, if only one is to be made, then the delayed evaluation is preferable.

The first infers that in the school situation outcome measures frequently depend upon the perception of teachers and parents. In such a situation, a set frequently is operant on the part of such judges, and even though behavior may, in fact have changed, older perceptions may be maintained by authority figures.

The second reason which argues for postponement of the evaluation relates to errors of measurement inherent in some of the criteria frequently used. This idea is typified by teachers' marks, which may be quite consistent over a longer period of time and for a given individual, but from one grading period to the next, may reflect that teachers need to give some low grades in order to balance out some "too high" grades given to the same students earlier.

The third reason for carrying out evaluation at a later date is that it is desirable to know whether or not gains made through counseling maintain themselves over a period of time or whether gains may grow, or even appear for the first time, considerably after the conclusion of counseling.

Particular attention needs to be given to measures which would indicate at the conclusion of counseling whether or not growth is seemingly transitory or permanent. One suggestion is that changes in responses to projective material, such as recollection, might be indicative of enduring patterns of growth.

Significant Difference Versus Meaningful Difference

The *sine qua non* of success in this type of research is the "significant difference" and certainly it deserves a prominent place in our evaluative procedures. It is easy to forget, however, that a *significant* difference and a *meaningful* difference are not synonymous. A prime factor in determining the magnitude that a difference needs to attain before it can properly be labeled significant is sample size. The larger the sample, the smaller the unit difference required for significance. In a large sample it is not inconceivable that a raw score difference of a single point on an achievement test might prove significant; whether it is, in fact, meaningful in terms of future approaches to a similar group is open to question. The question of significance is primarily a statistical problem. The question of meaningfulness is primarily a problem for the judgment of the group worker.

If we are dealing with familiar units of measurements, such as points of IQ or degrees of fever, we attribute meaning to the raw score differences; if we are dealing with unfamiliar units of measurements, such as raw scores on an unfamiliar test, we can attribute meaning to differences expressed in standard scores. For instance, the difference of 1/8th of a standard score has about the same meaning as the difference of about two points of IQ between two populations, whereas the difference of 1/2 a standard score corresponds to a difference of eight points of IQ between two populations.

In conducting research, the experimenter must be prepared to discuss both the magnitude of the differences and their significance.

It is not enough to say that the difference between two kinds of fever in an experimental study is three degrees Fahrenheit. The sample size may be very small and this difference may not be significant or stable. On the other hand, it is not enough to say that the difference between the two kinds of fever is significant. If the sample sizes are very large, the difference may be only 1/20th of one degree. The magnitude of the difference should be stated either in raw score terms (e.g., reduction in the number of cigarettes smoked per day) or in standard score terms, and the level of significance should be stated. The choice is not between meaningful difference and a significant difference -- both the meaning and the significance of the difference must be expressed.

Process Variables

It is probably true that the state of our knowledge about the effectiveness of group counseling is such that we are not in a good strategic position to make studies of variables presumed to be related to outcomes. At the same time, however, it would be desirable to be able to reproduce successful outcomes, and we also need to be concerned with such realistic problems as the selection and training of future counselors. In order to accomplish these ends it is necessary, unready as we may be, to undertake a study of the presumably relevant variables.

Elsewhere in this report it is forcefully and correctly pointed out that multivariate approaches can be utilized in a simultaneous study of process variables and outcome variables. In many situations, however, the statistical resources necessary for this kind of endeav-

or will not be available. In this kind of a situation it is possible to make use of less sophisticated techniques in order to study separately variables presumed to be related to outcomes. It would probably be advisable to study these hypothesized variables utilizing counselors whose success (or failure) can be predicted reasonably well ahead of time.

There are two general kinds of variables presumed to be related to outcome. These can be labeled process and situational variables. Process variables include anything the counselor does to achieve success and interactions which occur between counselor and counselee, or counselee and counselee. Essentially this class of variable is related to what counselor and counselee do in the group counseling relationship. The situational variable might be briefly described as reflecting what the counselor and counselee are. The attitudes, values, training and theoretical orientation of the counselor are examples of the kinds of thing which would be subsumed under this heading. With respect to the student, his presenting symptoms, age, sex, socio-economic background - as well as attitudes and values - are characteristics which can be placed in this category. In addition, if characteristics of the physical environment are considered important, these too can be classified as situational variables. It would be most desirable if process and situational variables were studied in relation to theories of change or development and if an effort could be made to approach the problem in this context.

Summary

It is difficult to distill the preceding material still further in view of its already compressed nature, hence the following points

are intended only to reflect a few of the highlights of the preceding discussion.

1. Sample size must be adequate to reflect differences which exist.
2. Outcomes investigated should be specific to individuals in a group rather than general.
3. It is important to collect data from group participants, but equally so to collect data independent of participants, including ratings of others and information reflecting behavior change such as grades, attendance, etc.
4. In group counseling research, the distinction between significant and meaningful difference should be kept in mind.
5. There is value both in simultaneous study of process and outcome, and in the separate study of these variables.

A general caution that will serve to reduce the problems of evaluation is that the researcher should be aware of both the previous research on group counseling which has been done with children similar to those with whom he proposes to work, and also with the general literature dealing with such children. Many problems of evaluation of the outcomes of group counseling by research workers have been faced by others before them and are thus avoidable.

The problems of the evaluation of the outcomes of group counseling are not simple and no easy solutions present themselves. The problems of determining appropriate outcome criteria and of choosing and developing instruments to measure them in reasonably accurate fashion are mountainous. The problem of evaluting how or

why group counseling is successful (or unsuccessful) is even more difficult. The undeveloped state of an art, however, is hardly a good reason for not studying it further, except for the faint of heart or those biased against the art. It is our clear responsibility to move ahead firmly with research in this area, albeit with greater sophistication and more concern for evaluation than has been shown to date.

Chapter III - CONCLUSIONS

CONFERENCE SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents reasons for the increasing importance of group counseling in the school programs: To assist individual students in their growth toward educational and emotional maturity as self-respecting and worthy persons in our mass production, automated and materialistic culture.

Before guidelines for future research can be drawn, there must be an understanding of terms, as well as general agreement about what group counseling is. While defining terms, problems became evident in designing research projects capable of producing valid and reliable results. It became apparent that it would be necessary in the future for specialists in several fields outside group counseling to combine their efforts from the beginning of planning a research project. It was suggested that the combined efforts of a number of school systems in various parts of the country would allow the identical experiment to be engaged in so that the sample size would be sufficient to give both meaningful and significant results.

The growth of group counseling programs in the schools and the requests for grants to support research in this field have been impressive during the past decade. The expansion of group counseling programs and of securing funds for additional research are dependent upon evidence of possible results. If the worth is proved to be a wise investment of school funds for the values accruing to pupils, the schools will be found willing to expand group counseling programs. Therefore, we wish to encourage members of the counseling

profession, both inside and outside the school setting, to study, confer with research experts, and evolve team approaches to research projects in group counseling. Significant areas where research is needed follow, as are some tentative hypotheses which need to be tested.

A PROPOSAL ON THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS FOR INCLUSION OR CONSIDERATION IN ANY FUTURE RESEARCH PROGRAM

At present, research in group counseling can be directed at determining the validity of specific techniques only. However, another type is also needed. An extensive research program is needed to determine the effectiveness of technical procedures arising from one theoretical orientation in comparison with those arising from other orientations. This program involves the following four steps:

1. Identification of the different techniques available for use in the schools

A survey of group counseling practices in schools that offer this service may reveal that some procedures which are commonly labeled "clinical procedures" are quite widely used in the public schools. Some techniques particularly designed for use in schools may be found to be little used. Some techniques that are frequently used in some schools or in some areas may be disclosed to be rarely used in others.

Completion of this first step of the research program may make possible an enumeration of all the presently known techniques available for use in group counseling with school children. Among other things, the findings may show the extent to which specific techniques

are being used; the reasons for extensive use of some and but little use of others; and, some of the obstacles to use of certain techniques commonly rated as highly effective, but rarely reported as being used.

2. Exhaustive description of each orientation

Each orientation is described in detail by a team of representatives of the given approach, rather than by one person alone. Because development of a theoretical orientation is a dynamic process, differences in points of view and in practices are not unusual among those of the same orientation, as well as among those of different theoretical orientations toward group counseling.

3. Demonstration of the major orientations

Each major approach to group counseling is demonstrated by its representatives. Each demonstration is followed by a group discussion in which participate representatives of all approaches being evaluated, including those persons who provide the descriptions and demonstrations. These discussions, it is believed, will be one way to clarify the similarities and differences of the various approaches being appraised.

4. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the orientations

Research is planned and carried out to determine the relative effectiveness of each group counseling approach. This research should be undertaken by persons other than those who provide the descriptions and demonstrations called for in steps 2 and 3, but they should include representatives of the theoretical orientations appraised.

Attention needs to be given to the development of theoretical models which specify the condition within a group which affect outcomes. Researchable process variables common to several theoretical orientations can represent a solution to the sample problem and several similar issues.

GROUP TECHNIQUE PROPOSALS

The validity of a group counseling technique can be evaluated only when the technique is used by a qualified, professionally competent group counselor. Any group counseling project that is subjected to research must involve group counselors who have developed the personal qualities needed and who have achieved competence through professional education and experience in group counseling.

The following list comprises several factors inherent in the group counseling technique which should be given the attention of more refined research:

1. Leader techniques

The counselor himself is a variable. Each counselor functions according to his orientation and within each orientation there may be personality differences among counselors. We should focus on those values counselors are exhibiting and how they exhibit them. What do they stress and omit and/or reject? Most of us have been academically successful. Do we unconsciously reinforce academic success as a standard and should we? We may be cutting out a lot of people we should be helping.

Also a study is needed of interaction effects of individuals in groups by cultural and socio-economic levels and how this may be influenced by the socio-economic level of the counselor.

2. Groups with or without adjunctive individual counseling

At the present time many counselors, because of their own training and orientation, prefer counseling groups in conjunction with individual counseling, or on the other hand, believe that little or no individual counseling is necessary when counseling groups. Other than preference, there is little evidence to prove one approach or the other more valuable.

3. Parallel, duo, and triplicate counseling groups (Parent, teachers, pupils)

By doing a research project in this area it may be found that by helping the adults concerned with the child, the child himself may be helped.

4. Group Size

Some authorities in therapy feel a group of six becomes a therapy group; a group of eight is the maximum size for intensive interpenetration; and that groups of fourteen or larger are suitable for counseling. The present inclination is to follow group therapy experience rather than discover the possibilities from our own counseling groups. With a clearer view of our goals in group counseling, experimentation with varied size groups could be carried out.

5. Length of group sessions

In schools, the length of a session is nearly always determined by the length of the school period for a class. Is this the optimum length of time for good counseling? Does the school period allow enough time for effective interaction?

6. Duration of the counseling sessions

Again, a series of counseling sessions is nearly always deter-

mined by the length of the school term, school holidays and the like. An examination is needed of the length and success of series of group sessions. Successful groups seldom wish to stop, so how can a group counselor best plan the termination process? Perhaps open-ended groups could continue year after year with additions and attritions occuring each year, and yet maintain a fairly constant membership.

7. Composition of groups

The means of selecting groups needs to be extensively researched since little has been done on this to date. There needs to be a study of autonomous in-groups or sex peer groups of preadolescents. Methods need to be developed to find out the needs expressed in these groups and how these needs can be better met in counseling groups.

8. Follow-up evaluation

The importance of delayed evaluation is discussed in the chapter on evaluation, but little research has been done on this subject.

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH TRAINING PROPOSALS

Since group counseling in public schools has usually been the outgrowth of emergency problems, it has become apparent that education for group counseling in both research and training must be improved. To raise the level of group counseling these steps, among others, were suggested:

1. Raise the standards of training and scope of responsibilities of the group counselor.
2. Make available in each state, region, or supervisory district, consultants and specifically trained group counselors and/or psychologists to provide supervision until school

counselors or local personnel are adequately trained for the group process.

3. It would be valuable to have a conference to report research which has already been done and to evaluate the conduct of the various experiments. A research specialist and a group counseling specialist can be given a small grant to evaluate prior research in group counseling according to the criteria set up in this report and report their findings to the profession.
4. Hold a future conference or institute composed of group counseling and research experts to discuss new research project designs before requesting funds to support them. The purpose would be to produce designs more likely to show positive results and to enlarge the scope of the population to be researched.
5. Provide a workshop or a series of workshops for counselor educators:
   a. to allow them to study the group counseling process.
   b. to have supervised practice in group counseling techniques led by experts from various orientations.
6. Plan an advanced workshop (two 3 hour sessions) on "Research in Group Counseling" to be held at the annual APGA convention. Prior application would be required and only a limited number accepted.

7. Make small grants to selected elementary and secondary schools throughout the country to begin the experimental data collection of information necessary to carry out the research program suggested in the section on Design. A grant should be sought for a team of research statisticians and group counselors to plan a design for such a research program.

EPILOGUE

It is most common at the conclusion of a conference such as the one which resulted in this report, for all participants to remark solemnly on what a valuable experience it was. Few, however, can point to a week of creative and concentrated labor like the one experienced by those who attended this conference. This report speaks for itself in this regard. In reading it, the reader should not be lulled into a false sense of security for these are only tentative propositions. In the applied behavioral sciences, the age of the clinical hunch is not yet past, nor is it likely to be past for some time. This material should be used for what it really is - a guide to improving the general level of research in group counseling in the public schools. It is not intended to circumscribe nor to delimit research efforts in group counseling. New and creative approaches, not even dreamed of here, need to be developed and tried. The concern is for group counselors to expand their horizons and at the same time think in a more systematic fashion about what they do and the results they get.

The findings of this conference seemed to have a broader application than just to group counseling. Much of the information presented in this report has direct application to individual counseling as well.

The need for theory building in group counseling is great, but the building blocks of theory - reliable principles - do not exist. For this reason the would-be experimentalist in group counseling is likely to be more hampered than helped, more illogical than logical, if he binds himself by strong emotional ties to any one of the several hypothetical systems currently in vogue. Such systems have come and gone in the past and they will continue to do so until appropriate evidence is forthcoming to support them. At this stage of development an attitude of openmindedness, plus keen clinical insight, will be more likely to result in reasonable, testable hypotheses.

To sum up, the art of the group counselor is making a valuable contribution to the lives of the people with whom he utilizes his special skills. In order to understand better what he does and why it works in some cases and does not in others, he should now be aware of a responsibility to harness research methods in search of some answers. It has been the aim of this writing to assist in the fulfilment of that purpose.